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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 057849

FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRID 1635 ACTION STATE INFO ALGIERS LISBON
MOSCOW NOUAKCHOTT PARIS RABAT MAR 10

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1635

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, SP, MO, UR
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIAL DISCUSSES SPANISH-
SOVIET EXCHANGES ON SAHARA AND LAW OF SEA

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO MFA SOURCES, SOVIETS HEDGING ON THEIR POSITION ON SPANISH SAHARA DISPUTE UNTIL AFTER ICJ RENDERS JUDGMENT. SOVIETS HAVE INFORMED SPANISH THAT THEY IN GENERAL SUPP-ORT APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLE OF SELF-DETERMINATION, BUT WITH CONDITIONS, AND THAT SOVIET UNION MUST TAKE ITS IMPORTANT INTERESTS IN MOROCCO INTO ACCOUNT. END SUMMARY.

2. MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS (AGUIRRE) BRIEFED EMBOFF ON DISCUSSIONS IN EARLY FEB BETWEEN SPANISH REP IN MOSCOW (IBANEZ) AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS ON SOVIET POSITION ON SAHARA.

3. ACCORDING TO IBANEZ' REPORT TO MFA, SOVIET OFFICIAL
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MADE FOLLOWING POINTS REGARDING USSR POLICY:

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A. SOVIETS RESERVING THEIR POSITION ON SAHARA
DISPUTE UNTIL AFTER ICJ DECISION. USSR ALSO CONSIDERS
IT NECESSARY TO WITHHOLD JUDGMENT AS SOVIET JUDGE NOW
SITS ON COURT.
B. USSR IN GENERAL UPHOLDS PRINCIPLE OF SELF-
DETERMINATION, THOUGH IN CASE OF SAHARA PRINCIPLE SHOULD
BE APPLIED WITH DUE REGARD FOR HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND
CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES. SPECIFICALLY, SOVIETS BELIEVE BORDERS
OF COLONIAL TERRITORIES SUCH AS SAHARA SHOULD BE CON-
SIDERED IN LIGHT OF POWER RELATIONSHIP PREVAILING AT
TIME THEY WERE DRAWN, I.E., WHETHER THEY REPRESENTED
AUTHENTIC ETHNIC, CULTURAL, AND GEOGRPAHIC DIVISIONS
BASED ON VALID HISTORICAL FACTORS OUTCOME OR WERE OF MORE
ARBITRARY IMPERIALISTIC ORIGINS. SOVIET UNION ITSELF
HAD CONSIDERED SUCH DISTINCTIONS IN DETERMINING
VALIDITY OF INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS WORKED OUT BY
CZARIST REGIME. CZARIST AGREEMENT THAT REPRESENTED
NOTHING MORE THAN IMPERIALISTIC EXPLOITATION OF FAVOR-
ABLE POWER RELATIONSHIP WERE ADJURED BY NEW SOVIET
STATES. WHILE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS, SUCH AS FRONTIERS
WITH CHINA, WHICH RESTED ON VALID HISTORICAL BASES,
WERE RETAINED (SIC).
C. IMPORTANT SOVIET INTEREST IN MOROCCO WILL HAVE
TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT, PRINCIPALLY SOVIET INTERESTS
IN PHOSPHATE AND FISHING, IN MOROCCO'S FAVORABLE GEO-
GRAPHIC POSITION, AND IN FACT THAT SOVIETS NEED
FAVORABLE POSITION IN ARAB COUNTRY WHERE US HAS MILITARY
INTERESTS. (AGUIRRE SPECULATED THAT THESE POINTS
WERE MORE LIKELY INFERENCES DRAWN BY IBANEZ RATHER THAN
EXPLICIT STATEMENTS BY THE SOVIETS.)

3. IBANEZ FURTHER REPORTED THAT SOVIETS HAD ATTRIBUTED
THEIR SUPPORT FOR MOROCCO IN UNGA VOTE ON ICJ REFERRAL
TO FACT THAT THEIR SUPPORT HAD BEEN ASKED IN COORDINATED
PARALLEL DEMARCHES BY MOROCCO, ALGERIA AND MAURITANIA.
AGUIRRE'S IMPRESSION CONTINUED TO BE THAT SOVIETS REMAINED
LUKEWARM TO MOROCCO'S SAHARAN AMBITIONS AND TO HASSAN
REGIME ITSELF, ATTITUDE WHICH EVIDENT IN UNENTHUSIASTIC
TREATMENT GIVEN LARAKI DURING HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW IN
EARLY FALL LAST YEAR. LARAKI, HE SAID, WAS NOT RECEIVED
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BY FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO EVEN THOUGH HE WAS AVAILABLE,
BUT BY FOREIGN MINISTER OF RUSSIAN SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.
A COMPLETE NONENTITY. HE UNDERSTOOD SOVIETS TO BE MIFFED
BY FACT THAT LARAKI ARRANGED HIS VISIT TO MOSCOW AS STOP-
OVER EN ROUTE TO TOKYO AND OTHER FAR EAST POINTS. HE
ALSO BELIEVED THAT DELAYS IN PRIME MINISTER OSMAN'S VISIT
TO MOSCOW ATTRIBUTABLE TO SOVIET LACK OF ENTHUSIASM.

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4. AGUIRRE CONFIRMED THAT TWO TOP MFA OFFICIALS ON SPAIN'S LAW OF THE SEA DELEGATION, CHAIRMAN JOSE MANUEL DE ABAROA AND JOSE ANTONIO YTURIAGA HELD TALKS IN MOSCOW WITH SOVIET LAW OF THE SEA EXPERTS DURING LATTER HALF OF FEB. HE CALLED TALKS THOROUGH EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON DIVERGENT POSITION OF SPAIN AND SOVIET UNION, PARTUCULARLY ON QUESTION OF INTERNATIONAL STRAITS. TALKS DID NOTHING TO BRING TWO POSITIONS CLOSER TOGETHER BUT, AS AGUIRRE DESCRIBED IT, AT LEAST LEFT IT CLEAR WHERE SPANISH STAND.

5. AGUIRRE COMMENTED THAT MOROCCAN SOURCES HAVE IMPLIED THAT GOM HAS SUGGESTED TO SOVIETS THAT MOROCCO WOULD BE MORE COOPERATIVE THAN SPAIN ON INTERNATIONAL STRAITS ISSUE IN LOS CONFERENCE IF SOVIETS WERE IN RETURN HELPFUL IN GOM'S EFFORTS TO REGAIN CEUTA, GOS, HOWEVER, HAD NO FIRM EVIDENCE THAT SUCH AN OFFER HAD BEEN MADE. HE NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT SOVIETS NOW ENJOY BUNKERING FACILITIES IN CEUTA GRANTED BY SPANISH LAST YEAR. SOVIETS STORE THEIR OWN FUEL THERE IN STORAGE TANKS OWNED BY COMPANIA GENERAL DE CARBONES, SPANISH FIRM. HE WAS INFORMED THAT SOVIETS NOW HAD INTEREST IN ACQUIRING SEAFRON PROPERTY FROM MOROCCO FEW MILES WEST OF CEUTA AT "BEN-SIK" (PHONETIC) FOR USE AS SHIPS SERVICING FACILITY. EATON UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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